

REMARKS

Claims 1-6 are all of the presently pending claims. The Examiner objects to claims 1-3 and rejects the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claims 4-6 are withdrawn based on Applicant's response to the restriction requirement.

The foregoing amendments to claim 1 are believed to overcome the above-mentioned objection and rejection.

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Vinson in view of Bourgois. Further, claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Vinson and Bourgois as above, and further in view of Edwards.

As described in the Background section of the present application, one difference between the present invention and the conventional method is that in the present invention, the cords are coated with rubber immediately after the arrangement of the cord units in a line. See claim 1 which recites this feature. Also, see paragraph [003] on page 1 of the specification. This feature solves the problems associated with conventional rubber coating processes (in which there is a relative distance between the comb roll and the press rolls), as described in the Background section of the

present application. Specifically, these problems include damage to the arranging state of the cords after being coated with rubber, bending of the belt layer in a direction perpendicular to the extending direction of the cord, and peeling of the belt cord from the coating rubber.

Vinson (see Fig. 1) suffers from the same problems as the conventional art described above and in the Background of the present application. As shown in Fig. 1, there is a relatively large distance between the reels 102 in the bead wire assembly station 42, where the wires are intertwined, and the rubberizing station 46, where the intertwined wires are coated with rubber. By way of contrast, claim 1 recites a process in which the cords are coated with an uncured rubber “immediately after the arrangement of these cord units in line.” Claim 1, last line.

Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that Vinson is deficient as explained above. In any event, even if Vinson could somehow have been modified as taught by Bourgois and Edwards, that combination would also be deficient, since the cords would still not be coated with rubber immediately after they are arranged in line. The Examiner relies on Bourgois for allegedly teaching a plurality of filaments arranged in parallel to each other, and he relies on Edwards for allegedly teaching the filament

diameters in claim 2 and the rubber gauge in claim 3. However, neither secondary reference supplies the deficiencies of Vinson pointed out above.

Applicant notes that Vinson is directed to an apparatus/method for forming a bead of a tire, whereas claim 1 explicitly recites a process "for coating a belt cord."

Finally, Bourgois repeatedly discloses that the parallel wires of each strip are tightly bound together by a wrapping wire or a binder. However, this is not required in the present invention, since the wires are held together by the inserter 5 and then immediately coated with a rubber which holds them in place.

Accordingly, for all of the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

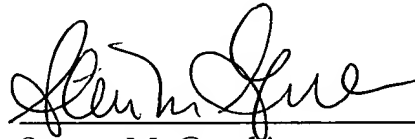
In view of the preceding amendments and remarks, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue that the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, he is kindly requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the local telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. SERIAL NO. 09/972,942

ART UNIT 1732
Q65006

A Petition for Extension of Time with appropriate fee accompanies this document. The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all additional required fees (except the Issue Fee and/or the Publication Fee) to our Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: March 24, 2004